

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 00548 01 OF 02 111759Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----118993 111807Z /42

O R 111746Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4689
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE
CINC USAREUR HEIDELBERG
CINC USAFE RAMSTEIN
CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 00548

EXDIS

MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, MPOL, GW, US
SUBJECT: GEORG LEBER AT BAY - II

REFERENCE: BONN 00304 DTG 061952Z JAN 78

1. THE PARLIAMENTARY DEFENSE COMMITTEE WHICH HAD
CONSTITUTED ITSELF AS AN INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE BEFORE
THE CHRISTMAS RECESS BEGAN THEIR SECRET HEARINGS INTO
THE LUTZE SPY SCANDAL YESTERDAY.

2. THE FIRST PERSON CALLED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE WAS
PUBLIC PROSECUTOR KURT REBMANN. REBMANN ATTENDED NOT
AS A WITNESS BUT TO HOLD "A CONVERSATION" WITH THE
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COMMITTEE DURING WHICH WE ASSUME HE ATTEMPTED TO
PERSUADE THEM TO DEFER THEIR INVESTIGATION IN ORDER
NOT TO PREJUDICE HIS OWN LEGAL CASE, WHICH HE IS
PREPARING AGAINST THE ALLEGED SPIES.

3. THE OPPOSITION CDU/CSU HAD BROUGHT CONSIDERABLE
PUBLIC PRESSURE TO BEAR ON THE COALITION TO HOLD OPEN

HEARINGS AND HAVE APPEALED TO THE RULES COMMITTEE OF THE BUNDESTAG FOR A DECISION. A RULING IS EXPECTED JANUARY 18TH - BUT IN VIEW OF THE COALITION'S MAJORITY IN THE RULES COMMITTEE THE RESULTS ARE A FOREGONE CONCLUSION.

4. THE CDU/CSU OPPOSITION WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK TO MILK THE MAXIMUM POLITICAL CAPITAL FROM THIS INVESTIGATION, IF POSSIBLE BY PROLONGING THE HEARINGS SO THAT THEY WILL AFFECT THE LAND ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN JUNE AND OCTOBER. THE OPPOSITION CLAIMS THAT THE SCHMIDT GOVERNMENT DELIBERATELY COVERED UP THIS SPY CASE IN THE MONTHS PRIOR TO THE OCTOBER 1976 ELECTIONS. IT BELIEVES THAT IT HAS WEIGHTY MATERIAL AGAINST MINISTER LEBER, AND IT WILL SEEK TO REBUT HIS EARLIER STATEMENTS ON WHEN HE FIRST LEARNED OF THIS CASE AND WHETHER HE READ THE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT PREPARED IN THE FMOD.

5. THE CDU HAS OBTAINED A COPY OF THIS FMOD STUDY, PREPARED IN JUNE 1977, WHICH ANALYZES THE EXTENT OF NATIONAL SECURITY DAMAGE WHICH THE LUTZE/WIEGEL REVELATIONS MIGHT HAVE CAUSED. (THIS DOCUMENT MAY HAVE BEEN THE SOURCE OF THE ARTICLE IN THE DECEMBER 12 EDITION OF THE FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG.) CDU CONTACTS HAVE TOLD US THAT THE PUBLIC HAS NOT YET LEARNED OF MANY CONCLUSIONS IN THIS STUDY, AND THAT
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THE GOVERNMENT - SPECIFICALLY MINISTER LEBER AND THE CHANCELLERY - BEARS A GRAVER POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY

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EXDIS

THAN IS PRESENTLY BELIEVED.

6. THESE CONTACTS ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT THE BUNDESTAG INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE WILL WORK OUT A PROCEDURE WHICH ALLOWS PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF SOME OF ITS WORK BUT WHICH ALSO TAKES ACCOUNT OF THE PLEA BY CHIEF FEDERAL PROSECUTOR REBMANN: I.E., THAT THE COMMITTEE DO NOTHING TO PREJUDICE HIS CASE AGAINST LUTZE/WIEGEL, WHOSE TRIAL WILL BEGIN IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. AT PRESENT, THE OPPOSITION HAS NO DESIRE TO CREATE A SEPARATE BUNDESTAG COMMITTEE WHICH WOULD HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS IN THIS CASE.

7. WE HAVE ALSO LEARNED FROM A SOURCE CLOSE TO DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER THAT HE PURPOSELY TOOK A LONG LEAVE TO REST AND PREPARE HIMSELF FOR WHAT HE KNEW WOULD BE A TRYING ORDEAL IN THE WEEKS AHEAD. THE
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DEFENSE MINISTER IS CONFIDENT THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF AND JUSTIFY HIS ACTIONS. AT THE SAME TIME A FEELING OF PESSIMISM PERVADES THE LEBER CAMP. EVEN HIS CLOSEST CONFIDENTS ARE BECOMING RECONCILED TO HIS POSSIBLE DEPARTURE LATER THIS SPRING.
STOESSEL

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